

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 117881 TOSEC 010090

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SUBJEC:PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT STEVEN ROBERTS PAGE 3 BYLINER TUES-
DAY, MAY 20, NEW YORK TIMES, HEADLINED "AMBIVALENCE IN
ATHENS".

2. THE GREEK GOVERNMENT RECENTLY DECIDED THAT SIX AMERICAN
DESTROYERS USING HOME-PORT FACILITIES NEAR ATHENS WOULD HAVE
TO LEAVE AND THAT AN AMERICAN BASE WOULD HAVE TO BE VIRTUAL-
LY CLOSED DOWN. AT THE SAME TIME THE GOVERNMENT SOUGHT
ASSURANCES THAT IF TURKEY ATTACKED GREEK ISLANDS IN THE
AEGEAN SEA, THE AMERICANS WOULD INTERVENE.

3. THE CONTRADICTION ILLUSTRATES A CENTRAL PROBLEM FOR
GREECE AS SHE EVOLVES A NEW FOREIGN POLICY AFTER MORE THAN
SEVEN YEARS OF MILITARY RULE. THE 10-MONTH-OLD GOVERNMENT
OF PREMIER CONSTANTINE CARAMANLIS IS WIDELY RESPECTED AND
ITS PROBLEMS ARE WIDELY UNDERSTOOD, BUT WITH REGARD TO RELA-
TIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES SOME OF THE PREMIER'S ALLIES
ARE TELLING HIM: "YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS."

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 117881 TOSEC 010090

4. MR. CARAMANLIS WITHDREW GREEK TROOPS FROM THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION DURING THE CYPRUS CRISIS LAST SUMMER. FACED WITH THE HUMILIATION OF THE TURKISH INVASION,

HE HAD TO DO SOMETHING TO SALVAGE GREEK PRIDE AND STRENGTHEN HIS POLITICAL POSITION, AND IN ONE STROKE HE MANAGED TO UNDERMINE MUCH OF HIS LEFTIST OPPOSITION.

5. NOW HE IS PUSHING HARD FOR GREECE'S ADMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, WHICH HE FEELS IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC FUTURE. HE ALSO SEES A UNITED EUROPE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE SUPERPOWERS.

NO LOVE FOR KISSINGER

6. WHEN HE VISITED BONN LAST WEEK TO PRESS HIS CASE FOR ADMISSION, HE WAS TOLD THAT IF HE WANTED EUROPE'S HELP, EUROPE EXPECTED SOMETHING IN EXCHANGE: GREECE SHOULD RETURN TO THE WEST. NATO GERMAN CHANCELLOR, HELMUT SCHMIDT ALSO STRESSED THAT STRONG EUROPE MUST MAINTAIN CLOSE LINKS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

7. ATHENS HAS BERATED WASHINGTON FOR HELPING THE TURKS AND SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER IS PROBABLY THE MOST DESPISED MAN IN GREECE. YET GREEK DIPLOMATS SAY THAT ONLY HE CAN SOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEMS EVEN SUGGESTING THAT HE PRODUCE A SPECIFIC PLAN--SOMETHING HE IS RELUCTANT TO DO.

8. MR. CARAMANLIS, WHO IS INTENT ON ASSERTING GREEK INDEPENDENCE, SAID IN A RECENT INTERVIEW THAT "WE SPEAK WITH THE AMERICANS AT ANY EQUAL LEVEL." YET ATHENS HAS ASKED WASHINGTON TO RESUME GRANTS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, A PROGRAM SMACKING OF A PATRON-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP THAT HAD BEEN ENDED BY THE MILITARY JUNTA.

9. AS FOR THE AMERICAN MILITARY FACILITIES, ABOUT 4,000 PEOPLE IN UNIFORM WORK AT SEVEN INSTALLATIONS, PERFORMING A WIDE VARIETY OF TASKS: COMMUNICATIONS, AIRPLANE AND SHIP MAINTENANCE, SURVEILLANCE OF SOVIET FLEET MOVEMENTS, PROTECTION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 117881 TOSEC 010090

10. AFTER WITHDRAWING GREEK FORCES FROM NATO MR. CARAMANLIS ANNOUNCED THAT GREECE WOULD CLOSE DOWN FACILITIES THAT DID NOT SERVE HER INTERESTS; EVEN HIS POLITICAL OPPONENTS HAILED THE MOVE. BUT WHEN THE GREEKS TOOK A CLOSER LOOK, THEY REALIZED THAT MOST OF THE INSTALLATIONS DID SERVE THEIR INTERESTS.

THE OBVIOUS TARGET

11. "THESE FACILITIES ARE VERY IMPORTANT AND TERRIBLY CONVENIENT FOR US, BUT WE CAN LIVE WITHOUT THEM" AN AMERICAN

OFFICIAL SAID. "I DOUBT WHETHER THE GREEKS CAN LIVE WITHOUT THEM."

12. MR. CARAMANLIS WAS DETERMINED TO DO SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT, AND THE HOME-PORT FACILITIES WERE THE OBVIOUS TARGET. THE MOST VISIBLE PROGRAM, IT GAVE THE GOVERNMENT THE MOST POLITICAL PROFIT. SINCE IT HAD BEEN STARTED BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, AMERICAN OFFICIALS CONSIDERED IT AN EMBARRASSMENT AND WERE HAPPY TO SEE IT GO.

13. BUT THE END OF PROGRAM, COMING AT A TIME OF RISING FUEL COSTS, WILL HAMPER THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SIXTH FLEET JUST WHEN GREECE WANTS ITS PROTECTION. ACCORDINGLY, THE AMERICANS MIGHT WELL BE ALLOWED TO KEEP CERTAIN SHIP-REPAIR FACILITIES AND TO RESUME LIBERTY VISITS.

14. AT FIRST THE GREEKS ALSO WANTED THE UNITED STATES TO VACATE ITS ATHENS AIR BASE. AFTER HARD BARGAINING THEY AGREED TO LET THE MOST IMPORTANT FACILITIES REMAIN BUT INSISTED THAT THEY BE MERGED WITH THE ADJOINING GREEK AIR BASE. OTHER AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS WILL ALSO BE PLACED UNDER GREEK COMMAND.

15. AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE TROUBLED UNITED STATES-GREEK RELATIONSHIP IS THE POST EXCHANGE, A LARGE DEPARTMENT STORE IN WHICH AMERICAN MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL --WHO MAKE MUCH MORE MONEY THAN THEIR GREEK COUNTERPARTS-- ARE ABLE TO BUY AMERICAN PRODUCTS AT DUTY-FREE PRICES.
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 STATE 117881 TOSEC 010090

16. THE AMERICANS SAY THAT IF THE GREEKS WANT THE SECURITY OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY, THEY MUST ALLOW THE MILITARY TO SUPPORT ITSELF. GREEKS FEEL THAT THE PX IS AN OFFENSIVE SYMBOL OF AMERICAN SUPERIORITY AND AFFLUENCE AND SHOULD BE ELIMINATED. THE ISSUE REMAINS UNRESOLVED. (END TEXT) INGERSOLL

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